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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 002901

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [TO](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: TOGO: MFA DIVIDED OVER GOF REACTION TO ELECTIONS

Classified By: Acting DCM Josiah Rosenblatt  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) At a National Day reception at the South African Embassy April 27, MFA PDAS-equivalent Elisabeth Barbier commented to Africa watcher on the situation in Togo, sighing wearily "one more crisis." Referring to the MFA statement of April 25, which described the elections as having proceeded under "satisfactory conditions" with "isolated incidents," Barbier (protect) said that the French response had been too quick, and too favorable.

2. (C) Asked whether the MFA statement had been driven by the Presidency, Barbier insisted that the statement had come from the MFA. She would not be drawn out when we suggested that it had been approved either by Nathalie Delapalme, FM Barnier's Africa advisor, or by Barnier himself who, unprompted, used a press conference in Luxembourg April 25 to call the elections a success.

3. (U) Several French papers published April 28 have criticized the MFA's characterization of the Togolese elections as a success. Le Figaro, refers to the subsequent MFA statement on legal mechanisms for recourse as be on the "borders of reality." Liberation, referring to France's ties with deceased President Eyadema asserts that Paris clearly aligned France with the regime, preferring Faure Gnassingbe as the best candidate to assure stability in Togo. Le Monde says that for decades Paris supported a regime which has ruined Togo, and says that Foreign Minister Barnier, instead of describing the elections as satisfactory, would have done better to follow the EU and the U.S. responses.

4. (C) Queried about the security situation, Barbier expressed concern to Africa watcher about the attacks on French nationals following the election, but insisted that France was not planning to conduct an evacuation.

WOLFF